

International Office

**Guidelines for
International Doctoral Candidates
at Bielefeld University**

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Preface

Dear Doctoral Candidates,

We welcome you warmly to Bielefeld University. It is our wish to support your intention to pursue a dissertation project in Bielefeld as well as possible. We want to make sure that you can work under optimal research conditions and enjoy a very pleasant stay in Bielefeld. No matter whether you have questions concerning organizational matters, social contacts, cultural offers, or information on financial aid: We are always there for you! We are looking forward very much to meeting you and hope that you take us up on our service offers.

This booklet for international doctoral candidates is a guideline for students from all fields and is supposed to help you in getting your doctorate. Here you find information on getting enrolled at Bielefeld University, tips on how to organize of your stay, and helpful advice for writing a proposal and your dissertation. The following link: <www.uni-bielefeld.de/aaa/wissenschaftlerinnen> will take you to further brochures for international researchers where additional information and addresses can be found such as ones about the city of Bielefeld and the region, the university, research institutions, and child care centers.

Above and beyond that, we want to draw your attention to another service for international doctoral candidates which can be found on our homepage at <www.uni-bielefeld.de/aaa/promovierende> and at <www.uni-bielefeld.de/aaa/phdstudents>. Here we introduce our program: a welcome meeting at which you can meet other doctoral candidates, and an internet forum where you can exchange ideas and information, the program *interKontakt*, which will assign you to a mentor to help you through the first week of your stay, language classes offered by PunktUm, and a cultural program – all extra offers on which you can draw if you need and want to. Come visit our homepage!

Writing a dissertation is a very complex project which needs very good organization and a lot of concentration. We hope that our program will help lead you to success. We would be very happy if Bielefeld University and its excellent qualifications open up the possibilities to make your stay attractive, for you to meet interesting people, and for you to keep fond memories of Bielefeld. Of course, we are always happy for any comments on how to improve our services.

With our best wishes for you stay in Bielefeld,
Your International Office

Note:

All statements, links, etc. were updated to November 2008.

Detailed information about Bielefeld and the University can also be found in the booklet "Information for international guest researchers at Bielefeld University" or at <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/aaa>.

1 Obtaining a Doctorate at Bielefeld University

Writing your dissertation at a German university means that you have to do research on your own and present the results in your dissertation. An important precondition is hypothesis, which should be as innovative as possible and relevant for your research area, and the necessary methodological knowledge. The individual stages as such are the dissertation (academic treatise), the doctoral defense ("Disputation" or "Rigorosum"), and the publication of your dissertation.

Depending on your research area, the topic of your dissertation, and your personal commitment it can take from two to six years to get a doctorate. Ideally it should not take you any longer than three years. In reality the average time for a doctorate in Germany is a lot higher, especially for the humanities. Many universities have started to introduce courses of studies for doctoral candidates in order to shorten these times. Within the organizational and curricular frame of a **graduate school** or a **graduate program (Research Training Group RTG)** doctoral candidates are supervised intensively and have the opportunity to meet with other doctoral candidates from the same research area. Not all universities and not even all faculties have introduced these well-structured courses of studies yet. At Bielefeld University there are three different paths a doctoral candidate can take in order to obtain a doctorate.

Approach to a Doctorate	Features
Individual Path to a Doctorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● No obligations to take classes● Dissertation supervisors are the direct but often only contacts● Financial support through a qualification position (specifically for doctoral candidates), scholarship, research assistantships
Graduate program / (Research Training Group RTG) (Graduiertenkolleg /GK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● usually financed by the German Research Council (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG))● limited time● dissertations are done within the framework of a coordinated research project● opportunity of exchanging ideas and experiences

with various university teachers and fellow doctoral candidates

- close supervision in connection with specific research areas
- usually with mandatory classes

Graduate School

- a permanent institution at a university with the financial aid of the state
- intensive supervision
- international and interdisciplinary orientation
- usually with mandatory classes

Individual Approach to a Doctorate

The doctoral candidates who choose the individual path to a dissertation, the so-called "apprenticeship-model," are not tied to any curricular frame but supervised solely by the advising professor. The content of the courses of study as well as what is learned has to do with the dissertation exclusively. Some supervisors conduct a colloquium for their doctoral candidates. In a colloquium of this kind doctoral candidates may introduce their projects, which are then discussed within the research area. It is recommended to take part in a doctoral colloquium because it gives the candidates the opportunity to discuss their dissertation projects as well as other academic topics and methodological questions with other doctoral candidates from the same area of research.

Graduate Program/(Research Training Group RTG)

Various foundations, among others the German Research Council (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG)), fund doctoral candidates in so-called **graduate programs**. These graduate programs were the first to set up structured programs for dissertations. Graduate programs usually are installed at universities for a limited period of time and have a thematic focus which fits into the research environment at the respective faculties. They offer doctoral candidates the opportunity to do their research and write their dissertation in a coordinated and thematically focused and interdisciplinary research program which is supervised by several university teachers. Such graduate programs are intended to replace the traditional individual approach to a dissertation. The additional offer of a systematic course program ensures a broad knowledge in and understanding of the respective area of research. A graduate program consists of ten to fifteen university teachers and about 30 graduate students. Generally, they also include up to three postdoctoral candidates.

A DFG funded graduate program usually includes some scholarships. Please find out if the graduate program you are interested in also offers scholarships for doctoral candidates.

The number of international doctoral candidates in a graduate program has risen considerably in the course of the last few years. In 2002, one fourth of the scholarship holders funded by the DFG were from outside of Germany.

Above and beyond that, German universities want to make the training for doctoral candidates more international and are therefore installing more and more **international graduate programs**. The concept of these international graduate programs is that doctoral candidates from German and foreign universities go through mutually developed research and study programs and are supervised by university teachers from the universities involved. This usually includes a six-month stay in the partner country.

Information on current national and international graduate programs at Bielefeld University can be found at: www.uni-bielefeld.de → Forschung → Graduiertenkollegs (<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Forschung/Forschungsschwerpunkte.html#4>).

An overview of German-wide graduate programs funded by the DFG can be found at: <http://www.dfg.de> → Förderung → Koordinierte Programme → Graduiertenkollegs → Liste der Graduiertenkollegs. (http://www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/koordinierte_programme/graduiertenkollegs/listen.html)

Graduate School

A **graduate school** differs from a graduate program in that it is a permanent part of a faculty and has a lasting effect on the structure of research and teaching. Graduate Schools are funded by the German states and usually offer a three-year study program ensuring intensive supervision as well as the excellent thematic embedding needed for dissertation projects. On the whole, it is expected that the dissertation is completed by the end of the program. Some of the courses in graduate schools are held in English in order to prepare doctoral candidates for their work in the context of interdisciplinary and international research.

The list of graduate schools at Bielefeld University can be found at: www.uni-bielefeld.de → Forschung → Graduate Schools (<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Forschung/Forschungsschwerpunkte.html#5>).

Doctoral Degrees

The following doctoral degrees can be obtained at Bielefeld University:

English:	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Bioinformatics and Genome Research:	Dr. Ing.: Doctor of Engineering
Biology:	Dr. rer. nat. (rerum naturalium): Doctor of the Natural Sciences
Biotechnology:	Dr.-Ing.: Doctor of Engineering
Chemistry/Biochemistry:	Dr. rer. nat. (rerum naturalium): Doctor of the Natural Sciences
German as Foreign Language:	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Education:	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
German:	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
History:	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Public Health:	Dr. P. H. (Public Health): Doctor of Public Health
Computer Science, cognitive	Dr.-Ing.: Doctor of Engineering
Computer Science, natural sciences	Dr.-Ing.: Doctor of Engineering
Latin (about to end)	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Linguistics	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Linguistics, clinical	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Literary Studies	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy Dr. math.: Doctor of Mathematics
Mathematics	Dr. paed. (paedagogiae): Doctor of Education (Department of the Didactics of Mathematics)
Media Studies	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Philosophy	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Physics	Dr. rer. nat. (rerum naturalium): Doctor of the Natural Sciences

Political Science	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Psychology	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Law	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Romance languages and literature (about to end)	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Sociology	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Sports / Physical Education	Dr. phil. (philosophiae): Doctor of Philosophy
Theology (protestant)	Dr. theol. (theologiae.): Doctor of Protestant Theology
Economics	Dr. rer. pol. (rerum politicarum): Doctor of Political Science and today also of Economics

2 Technicalities and Admissions Requirements for a Doctorate

This section will, first of all, give you information about getting enrolled at Bielefeld University, about visas, and registration in Bielefeld. These technicalities should be completed before you actually start with your dissertation.

2.1 Admission Requirements for a Doctorate at Bielefeld University

In order for you be admitted to a doctoral program at Bielefeld University you should first of all decide whether you want to pursue your dissertation project individually or as part of a structured doctoral program (graduate school or graduate program). This decision depends on your research area and topic. The list of the areas in which you can write a dissertation at Bielefeld University can be found at:

<http://www.zfl.uni-bielefeld.de/bielefelder-modell/bachelor/faecher-ba.html>

You can also get this information at the admissions office of the International Office.

Structured Doctoral Study Programs

If your faculty has a graduate school it usually means that you can pursue your dissertation only in the graduate school. A dissertation written in a graduate program, however, is thematically restricted. Therefore, it is advisable to contact the graduate school or graduate program in your special area first and apply there. The International Office will look at your university degree and check whether it is

equivalent to a German university degree. If your degree is not considered equivalent, you may have to do take some preparatory classes before you may start with your dissertation project. Some subjects require a minimum grade point average in your previous studies. Graduate programs and graduate schools usually admit students for the winter semester (October 1) or for the summer semester (April 1). Your application for the winter semester has to be sent to the graduate school by June 25 and for the summer semester by January 15. Graduate programs accept applications any time during the course of their research program.

In order to apply for admission to a graduate school or a graduate program you usually need the following papers:

- an informal request for admission to the doctorate,
- your résumé / curriculum vitae,
- a secondary school leaving certificate / university degree,
- if applicable, proof of German language proficiency,
- written confirmation from your supervisor,
- if applicable, a proposal.

The necessary papers can vary from faculty to faculty.

Detailed information about the formalities and the application procedure can be found on the websites of each faculty at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/> → Fakultäten/Einrichtungen as well as on the homepage of the International Office <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/International/Students/DE/Faecher/>

2.2 Individual Path to a Doctorate

If there is no graduate school or graduate program at the faculty that you have chosen for your dissertation you still have the opportunity to choose the individual path. If you want to be admitted as a free doctoral candidate for a doctorate program you have to look for a supervisor in your subject area. The information about the professors in your subject and their main research interests and areas can be found on the homepages of each faculty. You should contact your preferred supervisor and ask him or her to supervise your dissertation. After you have received a written confirmation you can apply for admission at the International Office. The **dissertation regulations** for each faculty say which type of university degree is necessary in order to be accepted for a dissertation at the faculty. In some cases they may also require additional prerequisites such as, for example, a two-semester study period at that faculty or special foreign language skills as well as

work in additional minor subjects or an entrance test. You should therefore read the **dissertation regulations** carefully. You can get the dissertation regulations at the dean's office of your proposed faculty or on the internet at:

Faculty of Biology

<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/biologie/Index/Studium/promobiofak.pdf>

Faculty of Chemistry

http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Ueberblick/Organisation/Verwaltung/Dez_II/Mitteilungsblatt/Jahrgang%2031/31-nr-04.html

Faculty of History, Philosophy, and Theology

http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Ueberblick/Organisation/Verwaltung/Dez_II/Mitteilungsblatt/Jahrgang%2031/31-nr-15.html

Faculty of Public Health

http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Ueberblick/Organisation/Verwaltung/Dez_II/Mitteilungsblatt/Jahrgang_32/32-04.html

Faculty of Linguistics and Literature

<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/lili/>

Faculty of Mathematics

http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Ueberblick/Organisation/Verwaltung/Dez_II/Mitteilungsblatt/Jahrgang%2031/31-nr-21.html

Faculty of Education

http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Ueberblick/Organisation/Verwaltung/Dez_II/Mitteilungsblatt/Jahrgang%2031/31-nr-13b.html

Faculty of Physics

<http://www2.physik.uni-bielefeld.de/72.html>

Faculty of Psychology and Sports

<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/psychologie/studium/promotionsordnung.pdf>

Faculty of Law

<http://www.jura.uni-bielefeld.de/Studium/Ordnungen/promotio.htm?pp=1>

Faculty of Sociology

<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/soz/igss/pdf/Promotionsordnung.pdf>

Technical Faculty

<http://www.techfak.uni-bielefeld.de/dekanat/Promotionsordnung.pdf>

2.3 Language Proficiency

When you apply for admission to a doctoral program there remains the question of your German language proficiency. You do not necessarily have to know any German. The decision in this respect is up to the dean. If the dean of "your" faculty confirms in writing that no German language knowledge is necessary or required for your dissertation project, you may be exempted from supplying any proof of German language proficiency. If you obtained your university degree at a German university you do not have to pass a German language exam. If, however, you are not exempted, you have to supply proof of your German language proficiency. This is usually done by way of one of the following exams:

- *German Language Certificate for University Admission* (Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang (**DSH**))
- *Test of German as a Foreign Language* (*Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (**TestDaF**)) consisting of four parts; here you have to have a level of at least "TestDaF-Niveau (TDN) 4" in each of the four parts. It is up to the faculty, however, to reduce the level for individual parts. Level TDN 3 is the lowest acceptable level.
- the language test based on the regulations of the *Exam of German Language Proficiency* (Prüfung zum Nachweis deutscher Sprachkenntnisse (**PNdS**)) for all universities in Germany
- a proficiency test or final exam from a German preparatory college (*Studienkolleg*)
- the *German Language Diploma* issued by the German Secretary of Education (*Deutsche Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz*) - level II (**DSD II**)
- the central high school exam (*Zentrale Oberstufenprüfung* (**ZOP**)) taken at a Goethe-Institute either in another country or at an institute that has permission from the Goethe-Institute to administer this exam
- the short or the long *German Language Diploma* (*Das Kleine oder das Große Deutsche Sprachdiplom* (**KDS/GDS**))

Further information about German language tests for university admission can be found at:

<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/lili/studiengaenge/daf/DSH/>

2.4 Application for Admission

As soon as you have clarified the above questions your next step is to **apply for admission at Bielefeld University**. It is best to contact the [International Office](#)

(<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Einrichtungen/Weitere%20Einrichtungen/AAA/>) about this. They will also supply you with the necessary papers. In the internet you can find an application form at:

<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/> → Fakultäten/Einrichtungen → Weitere Einrichtungen: → Informationen für Internationale Studierende. (<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/International/Students/DE/>)

The International Office processes your application and checks whether you have fulfilled the admission and enrollment requirements for Bielefeld University. If this is the case, you will receive an admissions notification as well as the necessary enrollment papers. The enrollment procedure itself takes place at the International Office. There you have to present your completed application for enrollment and proof of health insurance. It will take approximately another two weeks before you get your completed papers and student ID, which also serves as a semester ticket allowing you to use public transportation in Bielefeld for free. Information on the semester ticket can be found at:

<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/International/Students/DE/Index/>

2.5 Applying for a DAAD Scholarship

If you want to apply for a scholarship for your dissertation project from the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) you first of all need a letter of confirmation from your supervisor at the faculty at which you want to pursue your doctorate. This letter of confirmation is the basis for your application. After a successful application the DAAD will pass on the information that you have been granted a scholarship to the International Office. On this basis you will be admitted to a doctoral program.

2.6 First Steps in Bielefeld and at Bielefeld University

Before you come to Bielefeld you have to apply for a visa at the German Embassy or a German Consulate General in your home country. Please ensure that you apply for a **national visa** because only this kind of visa can be changed by the public authority for non-citizens ("*Ausländeramt*") in order to allow you to stay in Germany for a longer period (for example, for studies). You have to have a letter of acceptance from Bielefeld University which shows that you have been accepted as a student in order to apply for the visa. Furthermore, you have to show proof of health insurance as well as sufficient personal financial resources.

Detailed information on visas can be found in the booklet "Information for students from abroad" or at <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/aaa>.

A national visa is valid for three months. Therefore, it is highly recommendable that you apply for a visa with a longer duration at the Administrative Office for Citizens ("*Bürgeramt*" / "*Ausländeramt*" in the New City Hall in the center of Bielefeld) as soon as you can after your arrival. This means that you have supply an address in Bielefeld at which you can be reached during your stay in Germany. The best thing to do is to start looking for a place to stay in Bielefeld from your home country.

Detailed information on "Living in Bielefeld" can also be found in the booklet "Information for students from abroad" or at <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/aaa>.

As soon as you are enrolled as a student at Bielefeld University or received a letter of acceptance you may apply for student housing (please attach a copy of your letter of acceptance). There is a high demand for these inexpensive living accommodations and you should reckon with a waiting period of up to one year. Therefore, it is recommendable that you apply for student housing as soon as possible. The application form and the rules for the allocation can be downloaded at <http://www.studentenwerk-bielefeld.de/> → Services → Accommodation → Application form. (<http://www.studentenwerk-bielefeld.de/download/Bewerbung.pdf>)

The International Office (IO) can sometimes assist you in finding something in the student housing facilities. Information can be obtained at the following email address: wohnraum-aaa@uni-bielefeld.de. Above and beyond that, the International Office will forward rent offers to students and can give advice concerning accommodations.

Also ask members of your host faculty in Bielefeld whether they can help you find a living accommodation. Perhaps they know someone who will take you in, even if only at the beginning.

If you have to stay at a guest house initially you may contact the following institution:

Jugendgästehaus Dürkopp Tor 6 (Youth Hostel)
Hermann-Kleinewächter-Straße 1, 33602 Bielefeld
Telephone: +49- 521 - 522050
Fax: +49 - 521 - 52205110
E-Mail: jgh-bielefeld@djh-wl.de

URL: www.lvb.westfalen.jugendherberge.de/bielefeld/

Price per night starts at € 24.50

Inexpensive accommodations are offered by the following:

Student Housing	Owner / Landlord / Address of Administration
Student Housing (Wohnheim) Gustav-Bastert-Straße	Treuhandverwaltung Knapke Salzufler Str. 68, 33719 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521 – 9349951
Student Housing Lohmannshof Kreuzberger Str. 5-13 33619 Bielefeld	Bielefelder Gemeinnützige Wohnungsgesellschaft mbH (BGW) [Housing Cooperative] Carlmeierstr.1, 33613 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521 – 880901
Student Housing Lipper Hellweg 70 33605 Bielefeld	BGW See above
Student Housing Teichstr. 20-24 33615 Bielefeld	BGW See above
Student Housing Roggenkamp 18-24 33605 Bielefeld	BGW Contact Person: Herr Willenberg Roggenkamp 18-24, 33605 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521 – 286887 E-Mail: h.willenberg@bgw-bielefeld.de
Student Housing Ostmanturm Märkische Str. 11 33602 Bielefeld	Sozialwerk Bielefelder Freimaurer [Free Masons] e.V. Hanns-Bisegger-Str.7, 33602 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521 – 68698
Student Housing Wertherstr. 301 33615 Bielefeld	Hollensiek GmbH Detmolder Str. 13, 33604 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521- 965170
Student Housing Hollensiek 3-7 33619 Bielefeld	Hollensiek GmbH See above
Student Housing August-Bebel-Str. 57 a-c 33602 Bielefeld	Hollensiek GmbH See above
Student Housing Luisenstr. 12 33602 Bielefeld	Hollensiek GmbH See above
Student Housing Mönkebergstr. 2-4 33619 Bielefeld	Ravensberger Heimstätten GmbH [Housing Cooperative] Carlmeierstr. 2, 33613 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521 – 8807845
Student Housing Johannesstift Schildescher Str. 104 33611 Bielefeld	Ev. Johanneswerk e.V. [Protestant Church Housing] Schildescher Str. 104, 33611 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521 – 8012330
Student Housing Remterweg 45 33617 Bielefeld	Kirchliche Hochschule Bethel [Theological Seminary] Remterweg 45, 33617 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521 – 1443949
Student Housing Horstheider Weg 4-6 33613 Bielefeld	Gabriele und Karl-Heinz Holz Diebrocker Str. 587, 32051 Herford Tel.: 05206 – 3175

A private agency for accommodations can be found on the internet at:

<http://www.homecompany.de>

<http://bielefeld.studenten-wohnung.de>

The rent for one room in the private sector lies between € 180 and € 250 a month.

2.7 Technicalities and Registration. Going to the Authorities - What is Important?

As soon as you have gotten an apartment or a room you have to register with the Administrative Office for Citizens ("*Bürgeramt*") in the New City Hall (Niederwall 23, 33602 Bielefeld, phone: 0521 - 518128, fax: 0521 - 516196) or in the respective local Administrative Office for Citizens located in different parts of Bielefeld. In order for you to register you have to bring your national ID or passport. If you want to register in Bielefeld it is easier if you go to the central Administrative Office for Citizens in the New City Hall.

The Administrative Office for Foreigners is also located in the New City Hall. Here you can change your visa. The address is: Administrative Office for Citizens/Foreigners "*Bürgerberatung / Abteilung Ausländerangelegenheiten*" [Section for Non-Citizens], Niederwall 23, 33602 Bielefeld, phone: 0521 - 512274, fax: 0521 - 516195, opening hours: Monday – Friday 8 – 12 a.m., and Thursdays also 2:30 – 6 p.m.

In order to apply for a visa entitling you to a longer stay you have to bring your letter of acceptance from Bielefeld University or your semester card, a copy of your university degree (master's degree or the equivalent) as well as a proof of sufficient personal financial resources. This proof can be provided either in form of a scholarship grant or a guarantee of support from someone financing your stay, or the current balance of your bank account showing that you have at least € 585 per month at your disposal. Doctoral candidates also need a signature from their supervisor or Doctoral Committee showing that they are enrolled at Bielefeld University as a doctoral candidate.

Detailed information on "Registration" can also be found in the booklet "Information for international guest researchers at Bielefeld University" or at <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/aaa>.

Tip: The **mentoring program *interKontakt*** offered by the International Office helps international students get acquainted with Bielefeld and Bielefeld University. Every international student is assigned to a local mentor who can help with questions concerning the university, the course of studies, and the city of Bielefeld and who functions as your personal contact. Above and beyond that, these mentors can also

help filling out the registration forms, getting registered, going to the authorities, as well getting to know people. Detailed information about *interKontakt* can be found at [InterKontakt](#) in this document (section 5.1) or at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/AAA/Promovierende>.

3 Preparing your Dissertation

Once you have decided to pursue a doctorate, you should take the following steps:

- 3.1 Find a suitable topic.
- 3.2 Form your hypothesis.
- 3.3 Find a supervisor for your dissertation.
- 3.4 Write a proposal.
- 3.5 Secure the financing of your dissertation project.

3.1 Finding a Suitable Topic

It is not so easy to find a suitable topic for a dissertation. The topic has to offer enough material for you to work on it for a longer period of time. On the other hand, it should not be too broad because you want to finish your dissertation after a set period of time. In any case you should ask your supervisor for help regarding the feasibility and scope of your project.

One possibility for finding a topic is that you use the experience you have already gathered from writing term papers or final theses, such as your M.A. or M.S. thesis. Look for topics that fascinated you. Use state-of-the-art research literature or talk to researchers in your area and find out whether the aspect that interests you is worth looking at in more detail.

In the computer and natural sciences supervisors tend to suggest a topic. In this case you should think about whether this topic really interests you, whether you may want to change it, or set the focus differently in order for it to be of interest to you.

As soon as you have decided on a topic for your dissertation it is important to **narrow it down**. This way you can work on it academically. This means that you discuss with your supervisor what you can realize academically within the framework of your dissertation. If your topic is too broad, you may risk not ever finishing it. In a first working title you can already put some limitations on your topic.

If you write your dissertation in a graduate program or graduate school, your topic has to fit into the predetermined main research area. In order to get an idea of the spectrum of this area it is ideal see what other dissertations are being worked on currently. Information about this can be found on the homepage of the respective graduate school or graduate program. Your supervisor can help you narrow down the topic or make it fit into the framework of the graduate program or graduate school.

Above and beyond that, you can find ideas for a possible topic in **scholarly publications** which give you an overview of the state-of-the-art.

3.2 Formulating your Hypothesis

The clearer you formulate your hypothesis, the better you can narrow down your topic. The hypothesis has to be answerable in such a way that something academically new is the result. By narrowing down the topic of your dissertation you also formulate your research question at the same time. This in turn leads to a vast number of further questions which are closely connected to the hypothesis. When you are formulating such further questions be sure that you don't lose the thread but stay close to your hypothesis. In this way you avoid becoming too descriptive. You should also remember that the theoretical part of your dissertation has to be coordinated with the empirical part (if your dissertation has an empirical part). The theory is always the means to the end and should not be left unconnected. A good dissertation will go back to the beginning and relate it to the conclusions reached. This means that at the end you have to check which subquestions you have actually answered. Questions you have ignored should then be left out altogether. New and relevant questions that may have come up in the course of the dissertation will then have to be put into the theoretical part.

3.3 Finding a Supervisor

After you have found a topic and gotten an idea about the time needed and the financing of your dissertation, you have to look for a supervisor. Your supervisor is supposed to support your project and advise you academically. Generally you will find that professors are also very helpful in finding scholarships.

Your supervisor may later be your most important or even only contact person while working on your dissertation. Therefore it is important that you and your supervisor establish a good relationship in order for you to finish your dissertation successfully. Think about whether you can work together well with the

professor and if she or he can actually support you academically. Try to get as much information as possible on your prospective supervisor. Before you have a first talk with your supervisor, the technical prerequisites should be fulfilled such as the admission to the doctoral program. Once you have been admitted, it is the supervisor's responsibility to support you academically. It will be helpful if your topic belongs to the research interests of the professor.

The following questions may help you in finding and choosing a supervisor:

-
- Does your topic fit into the research area of the supervisor?
- Do you and the supervisor share the same methodological concepts?
- Do you have the feeling that you and your professor will be able to work together?
- Do you think that your supervisor or her/his assistant have enough time to advise you?
- How many doctoral candidates are being supervised at the same time?
- Does the supervisor have a doctoral colloquium?
- What kind of reputation does the supervisor have?

After you have chosen a supervisor and she or he has accepted you as a doctoral candidate, you have to discuss the further procedure! It is best to agree on a schedule. This means, for example, regular meetings for talks (e.g. once a month). In these meetings you can discuss the steps you have taken or plan to take, problems you have come across, or talk about possible conflicts and dissatisfaction on either or both sides. Stick to this schedule as strictly as possible!

3.4 Writing a Proposal

Your future supervisor will most likely ask you in your first talk to write and hand in a **proposal** about your dissertation project. You have taken the first step: the professor has signaled her or his willingness to be your supervisor. Now you have to present your project in a brief, comprehensible, and, most importantly, well structured way. The best way to do this is if you ask yourself what it actually is you want to do. Nobody expects any final answers at this point. In order for you to do that, you have to do your research. The results of your research are part of your dissertation and not of the proposal. In your proposal you outline what you think you might actually achieve in terms of research. Further, you present the methods you want to use to solve the problem and draft a preliminary **outline**. This proposal has to be handed in to you supervisor and also to any foundation you may have applied to for a scholarship. However, there is no set form for a proposal but quite

a few research institutions and foundations have published guidelines for proposals which you can use to get some orientation.

Suggestion for the Organization and Outline of a Proposal

- Present a hypothesis and the goal of your project. The formulation "The goal of this dissertation is to contribute to the discussion about ..." may be helpful for you.
- Describe what academic area or subdisciplines you have chosen you see your dissertation in.
- Present the state-of-the-art: Has this topic been looked at from a research point of view before? What are the most important academic positions? How does your topic or your problem fit in?
- Explain your academic interest in this topic and possible work you have already done in this area.
- State more precisely what you want to find out and concentrate on the important things that it is possible to investigate.
- Present your methodology. Explain the following questions: Which methods do you have at hand and which still have to be developed? Which methods will not be chosen?
- Draft a preliminary outline.
- Add a work and time schedule to your proposal. This is supposed to show how much time you intend to spend on each step. It is advisable to choose steps in three-month intervals. Above and beyond that, the schedule should also show that your project can be completed within the normal time frame (usually two to three years).
- Compile a bibliography. You should make a selection and list only core literature. The bibliography in a proposal should not exceed two pages.
- A proposal is usually between five and twenty pages long.

Tip: PunktUm offers various workshops for international doctoral candidates at Bielefeld University on how to write academic papers. The content of these workshops includes, among other things, specific exercises on the use of academic German, working on scholarship applications as well as writing proposals. Above and beyond that, these workshops deal with all kinds of questions about dissertations. If you have problems writing your proposal, you are urgently advised to take part in such a workshop.

Detailed information can found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/> → Studium → Studienbegleitende Angebote → PunktUm → Sprechen und Schreiben an der

3.5 Securing the Financing your Project

If you have financial worries it is hard to concentrate on your dissertation or to develop creative ideas. Therefore you should clarify the question of how you want to support yourself financially first (costs for the research itself plus living expenses). If you have a paid position as a doctoral candidate this question is answered easily and immediately. For all other doctoral candidates there are different ways of supporting yourself:

- Support by a third party such as your parents or partner etc.,
- savings,
- a scholarship,
- a job on the side which does not take too much time.

Please remember that it takes a lot of time to write a dissertation. If you want to complete your dissertation within a fixed time there is a limit to how long you can do non-dissertation related work and write at the same time.

It is easiest and most convenient if you have a doctoral scholarship. Scholarships have the advantage that you can spend all your time on your dissertation. The downside of a scholarship is that it does not offer any kind of social security in terms of old age or unemployment insurance. Also, you have to pay for your health insurance. On top of that you cannot call your scholarship time work experience, unlike those doctoral candidates who work on their dissertation while academically employed.

In Germany there are a number of institutes, companies, and foundations that finance dissertations with a specific topic (see Appendix). **Bielefeld University** also grants scholarships financed with university funds every year. These scholarships mostly go to qualified researchers from areas where there is a strong need for young academics. About two-thirds of these scholarships go to women, and at least one foreign applicant or one project with an international focus is granted a scholarship every year.

Applicants have to be doctoral candidates who have fulfilled the admission requirements for a doctorate at a faculty of Bielefeld University, have a qualification that is significantly higher than average (usually a final thesis with the best grade), and with a dissertation project than can be expected to make a substantial

contribution to the respective research area. For foreign doctoral candidates it is important that admission to the doctoral studies lies no further than one year back. Having raised children or worked academically will be taken into account. The funding generally lasts for a period of two years but may be extended by one additional year if a plausible reason is put forward. The **committee for scholarship distribution** at Bielefeld University decides about the applications. This is a two-step procedure. In a first step there is a pre-selection of the applicants based on their written application. After the second step, in which applicants have an interview and present their project, there is the final selection of applicants.

Generally, the basic size of a scholarship grant is € 1,000 a month. In addition there is lump sum of € 150 for child care, if there are children that have to be cared for. Above and beyond that, it is up to each faculty to add up to € 500 from faculty money or third-party funds.

Detailed information on scholarships given by Bielefeld University can be obtained from Dezernat II (Section Academic Affairs), room: C0-250, telephone: (0521) 106-5222.

Guidelines for scholarships and application forms can be downloaded at:
<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/> → Überblick → Organisation → Verwaltung → Dezernat II → Dokumente und Vordrucke (http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Ueberblick/Organisation/Verwaltung/Dez_II/dokumente.html)

Aside from these Bielefeld University scholarships there are other scholarship options for foreign students. Some foundations, companies, and institutes finance individual dissertation projects for a period of up to three years. Usually you apply for these scholarships right after having finished your first or second university degree. Guidelines for granting a scholarship differ depending on the foundation. Generally you can assume that you have to add a proposal as well as a letter of confirmation / reference from your supervisor to your application. Above and beyond that, you have to show proof of enrollment at a German university. Some foundations ask for a written statement that you will return to your home country once you have completed your doctorate. Therefore, it is advisable to find out about the conditions and prerequisites as well as the ideological orientation of the foundation before you actually apply for or accept a scholarship. Many foundations have **academic counselors** who work at the universities as university teachers. They can advise you in more detail. Depending on the foundation you can either apply for a scholarship directly or be proposed by a university teacher.

Other foundations not only grant scholarships but also endeavor to enhance you academically. In such cases you have the obligation to attend events and seminars regularly and/or to write a final report on your dissertation.

Above and beyond that, the political or church affiliated foundations expect that you are socially or politically engaged and can show evidence of this. In addition, these foundations ask for **interim reports** in regular intervals which document the progress of your research. These reports have to be confirmed by your supervisor. Usually it depends on these interim reports whether your scholarship will be continued or not. Keep in mind that this can be an additional factor which puts pressure on you. Writer's block may be strengthened instead of eased by knowing that you have this pressure in regard to time and results.

- **Overview of the Most Important Scholarships**

The **German Academic Exchange Service** (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)*) is a joint institution of all German universities instituted to strengthen the relations of these universities to other countries. Primarily, this is accomplished through the exchange of students, graduates, and researchers. The DAAD grants research scholarships for doctoral candidates and young researchers who want to do research at a German university with the goal of getting a doctorate in Germany or their home country as well as for research without a degree as its goal. This is the so-called **Sandwich-Model**. This means that the doctoral candidate pursues his or her research in Germany and the home country. The doctorate is completed in the home country. If a doctoral candidate wishes to complete the doctorate in Germany, too, this will be supported only if there are plausible reasons.

The age limit for doctorate scholarships is 32 years and 36 years for the Sandwich-Model. Applicants who have spent two or more years in Germany at the time the scholarships start are not eligible for these programs.

Detailed information on scholarships granted by the DAAD can be found at: <http://www.daad.de/deutschland/foerderung/02055.de.html>

The DAAD also has a database on scholarships on their homepage as well as an extensive list with links where you can look for a suitable scholarship.

The **German Research Council** (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)*) is a central self-governed research institution for the enhancement of research at German universities and publicly financed research institutions in Germany. Foreign researchers will be financially funded if they plan on continuing their research in Germany. One way of getting financial support for your own project is through a DFG funded graduate program at a German university. Applications should be submitted directly to the graduate program.

Detailed information on funding by the DFG can be found at:
<http://www.dfg.de/internationales/nachwuchs/index.html>

Aside from financial support the major **institutions for the support of the highly gifted** by political parties and churches offer workshops, events, and colloquia to their scholarship holders in addition. They also work as networking starting points and have good connections to other institutions.

More information can be found at: <http://www.begabtenfoerderungswerke.de>

Aside from these large foundations and institutions which grant scholarships there are other possibilities of getting topic- or area-related financial funding. An overview of all the existing foundations can be found in the **Index of German Foundations** (*Index Deutscher Stiftungen*) which lists more than 1,360 links to internet pages of foundations. This can be found at <http://www.stiftungsindex.de>. Also there is the **Organization of Benefactors of German Research** (*Stifterverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft*), which manages different foundations. At <http://www.stifterverband.org> you can look for research-area-related scholarships. Above and beyond that, you will find an overview of institutions granting scholarships for international doctoral candidates in the appendix.

Aside from a scholarship you can also finance your dissertation by means of a job at your professorial chair. This is common in the natural sciences and in experimental areas because research costs there tend to be very high. These so-called doctoral positions or qualification positions are paid for by the university and explicitly serve as jobs for young researchers working toward further job qualifications. If you apply for a qualification position, you cannot choose your supervisor or topic because both are predetermined. However, you may be able to choose between different theoretical angles or questions within the thematic frame. A doctoral position includes teaching, administrative work, proctoring exams, and corrections, all of which cost a lot of time. Only a part of the weekly hours can be spent working on your dissertation. Qualification positions, on the other hand, also have their advantages. Aside from the closeness to the research area they provide contacts to well-established researchers and often occupational qualifications such as didactics experience, project management, communication and presentation, and participation in teaching and administration.

Qualification positions are limited to a maximum of four years. They are jobs as research assistants or graduate assistants. They are either advertised in-house or Germany-wide.

Information on qualification positions at Bielefeld University can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/> → Aktuelles → Stellenausschreibungen (<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Aktuelles/Stellenausschreibungen/>)

Another variant of doctoral positions are third-party-funded positions. In this case the professorial chairs or institutes have a project that is funded by an institution or foundation. The duration of such a position depends on the duration of the project funding. Generally third-party-funded assistants are not obliged to teach. However, if the workload for the project is high the advantages and disadvantages of these positions are equivalent to those of qualification positions.

Third-party-funded projects at Bielefeld University can be found on the pages of the faculties and institutes at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/>

4 Working on Your Dissertation

First and foremost, a dissertation is a written work in which the thoughts formulated are brought together in a context. Someone who reads, collects, and researches forever will never reach the goal. The true accomplishment of the dissertation is the academic treatment of a hypothesis in writing. The dissertation can be done as an **individual piece of work** (monograph), as **team work**, or as a **cumulative dissertation**.

At the International Graduate School of Sociology as well as in the natural sciences at Bielefeld University it is possible to compile several previously published papers with a hypothesis (cumulative dissertation). If the dissertation is worked on by a team then each individual contribution has to be equivalent to an individual piece of work and has to be assignable to one author only.

As a matter of principle, a dissertation is written in German. However, most faculties allow their doctoral candidates to write their dissertation in English. This requires permission from the Doctoral Admissions Committee. The natural sciences also require a summary of no more than five pages in English. If you want to write your dissertation in English or another language you have to hand in an application to the Doctoral Admissions Committee of the respective faculty, graduate school, or graduate program. Some faculties for the humanities also ask for a twenty page summary in German. The Faculty of Sociology wants this twenty-page German summary only if you write your dissertation in language another than English. Please enquire at your faculty which languages are permitted and which additional requirements you have to fulfill.

Working on your dissertation is very time consuming. You will spend a lot of time formulating your ideas in such a way that they meet academic criteria. You should therefore think about the organization of your work and your schedule early on. Imagine your dissertation as a project whose manager you are.

International doctoral candidates who were used to intensive supervision during their studies in their home country should familiarize themselves with independent work, especially if they choose the individual path towards a doctorate. Working independently is expected of doctoral candidates at German universities. Contacts with other doctoral candidates by means of networks or graduate programs may be very helpful.

4.1 Building a Network

Doctoral candidates who write their dissertation as a member of a **graduate program** or **graduate school** tend to find well-functioning networks, which are often also established on an international level. Doctoral candidates employed at a professorial chair can rely on the faculty network. Those, however, who pursue their dissertation individually are usually left more or less to themselves and have to find their most important research contacts on their own. Ask your supervisor for possible discussion partners and researchers working on a similar topic.

You are not limited to events at your professorial chair but can also go to **conferences, meetings, and conventions** in order to gain important research contacts. Above and beyond that, you will find that **doctoral colloquia** serve as an optimal platform for discussions with other doctoral candidates. Colloquia are customarily held by professors and offer doctoral candidates the chance to present their work for discussion. **PunktUm** (<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/punktum>) and its program accompany international doctoral candidates with its tutors.

Supraregional **colloquia** are used for intellectual exchange between young researchers coming from different universities. These colloquia, too, can be used as platform for growing accustomed to presenting results as well as gaining the attention of researchers at other universities.

Scholarship holders coming from foundations can, in addition, use scholarship-holder seminars to gain access to an international network of doctoral candidates. These **meetings** are not only very important for research work with others but also for your personal and social contacts outside the university. Some sponsors offer internet platforms on which former scholarship holders pass on their experiences and insights.

Initiatives for doctoral candidates offer not only personal contacts but also information on dissertations in general. Especially in a situation of crisis you will find empathy and support for your dissertation from people in a situation similar to yours.

In 1991 **Thesis e.V.** (<http://www.thesis.de>) was founded as a network for doctoral candidates in order to get people working academically to , support, and talk to each other. Interdisciplinary cooperation beyond the narrower scope of the area is the core principle of this network. Thesis e.V. has about 600 members from approximately 80 different areas. 150 of these members already have their doctorate.

Thesis e.V. is the co-founder of Eurodoc. **Eurodoc** (<http://www.eurodoc.de>) was founded in 2002 and is the European umbrella organization for young researchers in Europe. In the meantime Eurodoc has become a much demanded discussion partner of the European Committee and has more than 20 member organizations.

In the fall of 1999 doctoral candidates in Germany, financed by different foundations and institutions, came together and founded the **Initiative for Doctoral Candidates** (*Promovierenden-Initiative*). Their goal is to exchange information on developments in university policies, the situation of doctoral candidates at German universities and different foundations, and to initiate a process for shaping opinions. The initiative represents the interests of doctoral candidates at the institutions and those making the decisions. Problems are discussed and solutions or suggestions for improvements are looked for in cooperation with partners from universities, politics, and society. Currently, the focus lies on the following topics:

- What possibilities are there for doctoral candidates in order to find academically relevant contacts?
- What social, legal, and financial status do doctoral candidates have?
- What are the job opportunities like for doctoral candidates?
- What are the current developments in university policy?
- How can doctoral candidates network and engage in academic exchange?

The Initiative for Doctoral Candidates publishes and updates information on "Getting a Doctorate in Germany and Europe" regularly at:
<http://www.promovieren.de.vu/>

On the **Platform for Doctoral Candidates** (*Doktorandenforum* (<http://www.doktorandenforum.de/index.htm>)) doctoral candidates find many helpful tips about getting a doctorate, i.e. starting from making the decision to

write a dissertation in the first place all the way to how to publish the dissertation. Above and beyond that, it offers a chat room in which doctoral candidates and people who plan to do their dissertation can exchange experiences and insights.

Doctoral Candidates Networking (*Doktoranden Networking* (<http://www.doktoranden-netz.de/>)) is an open online community with the objective of offering quick and pragmatic support concerning all sorts of questions about doctorates. Anyone can take part, ask questions, or offer help and advice. You can search in different categories, exchange with other doctoral candidates by means of the platform, or tell the editorial department via email what you think might help other users. Interesting comments are collected in a so-called "knowledge pool" available directly for all users.

Gradnet (Gradnet (<http://www.gradnet.de/>)) is an innovative project trying to link young researchers from the humanities and the social sciences. It offers possibilities for critical and productive exchange at international, interdisciplinary conferences as well as in publications. Above and beyond that, Gradnet presents the interests of non-tenured doctoral assistants at universities, technical colleges and universities, and other academic institutions.

Aside from building and taking care of an academic network you should not forget about or neglect your **personal circle of friends** outside of university. Personal contacts offer some kind of counter-weight and may pick you up emotionally if things don't go well. Good friendships, pleasant and regular leisure and social activities as well as phases of quiet and relaxation are very important in order to charge your creative energy. Choose a day on which you take off. This time off is real time off. If you are able enjoy this time without getting a bad conscience you will also be able to get back to your desk much more revived and able to write well. If you work doggedly all the time, it may not pay off in the end. A dissertation takes too long for you to work non-stop. In order for you to have an improved social life Bielefeld University offers a special cultural program for international doctoral candidates. Information about this can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de>

4.2 Organization, Project and Time Management

Someone who wants to spend a lot of time on a project such as a doctorate should start thinking early about the organization of the work and make a schedule. But never forget: A dissertation is not a piece of work for the Nobel Prize committee. You are supposed to do something new but not get lost. Don't take up too much but narrow down your topic in a reasonable way. This will save you from wasting

time and energy. Set a realistic goal and plan your time accordingly. The quality of your work does not necessarily depend on the time spent on the work. Analytical as well as content depth, formal accuracy as well as linguistic elegance also contribute to this.

As a rule scholarship holders should complete their doctorate within two to three years. Many foundations grant a third year depending on what has been achieved in the first two years. If you do not manage to complete your doctorate within these three years, you will have to find further funding. It is expected of doctoral candidates in graduate schools and graduate programs that they complete their doctorate within three years. When you draft your schedule, set yourself a limit of three years.

Remember when planning your schedule that the **final editing**, for example formatting, is very important and may take a lot of time. It is best to calculate two months for final editing and to remember it is easy to fall behind on your schedule. By doing this you can limit your topic time- and content-wise before it is too late. Furthermore, it is of an advantage if you split your schedule up into different work phases such as looking for literature and reading it, data collection, data evaluation, etc. Plan out each of these steps with a time span and set yourself a deadline by when you want to have completed the individual steps. Formulate weekly goals as well. Try to reach these goals if possible. Also remember that it is hard to take up the work again after a longer break.

Successful time management needs one thing more than anything else and that is **good organization of your work**. This means that your bookcase is sorted and orderly and your desk is clean, that you catalog the literature you have checked out for your dissertation or have at some point copied. There are different ways of cataloging. One is the traditional method of using note cards, and the other is to use computer software. The advantage of the software is that the literature compiled and saved can afterwards be easily put together as a bibliography and exported to other files such as the dissertation. Nowadays, there are relatively inexpensive programs available that you can download from the internet.

This is a list of the most widely used bibliography management programs:

Program	Internet address	Price
Bibibamos	Http://www.workingpapers.de/gepec/htms/bibibamos.htm	free
Biblist	Http://cogweb.iig.uni-freiburg.de/biblist/	free
Bibliographix	Http://www.bibliographix.de/	Starting at € 40
Bismas	Http://www.bismas.de/	About € 200

Cardbox	Http://www.cardbox.com/	About £ 55
Citavi	Http://www.citavi.com/	Free for Citavi Free, About € 90 for Citavi Pro
Endnote	Http://www.adeptsience.de/bibliographie/endnote/index.html	About€ 205.62
Gelit	Http://www.gelit.de/	About € 15
LexiCan	Http://www.lexican.de/	€ 29.90
Librixx	Http://www.librixx.de/	Starting at € 15
Lidos	Http://www.land-software.de/	n.s.
Liman	Http://www.liman.de/	Starting at € 14.90
Paradise	Http://www.winkler-infosysteme.de/literasoft/indexhaupt.htm	Starting at € 229.68
ProCite	Http://www.adeptsience.de/bibliographie/procite/index.html	Starting at € 223.25
Reference Manager	Http://www.adeptsience.de/bibliographie/refman/index.html	Starting at € 229.12
Synapsen	Http://www.verzetteln.de/synapsen/synapsen.html	Starting at € 49
Visual Composer.NET	Http://www.visualcomposer.de/	Starting at € 39.50

These programs are for Windows, in some cases for Mac (Endnote, ProCite) or Mac OS X (Synapsen) and for Linux and Unix (Synapsen).

Tip: Bielefeld University has a campus license for some of these programs. Ask at your faculty or in the University Computer Center (*Hochschulrechenzentrum* (<http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/hrz/>)) whether you, as a member of the university, are eligible to use these programs free of charge or at a reduced price.

As a doctoral candidate you get a student ID which also functions as your library card. This allows you to use the media offered by the university library (<http://www.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/>). The library has more than two million books as well as an increasing number of journals and scientifically relevant texts online. About 95% of all books and journals may be checked out of the library. The lending period for books is four and for journals two weeks. This period can be extended up to five times as long as no other user needs the media. The online offers by the library are especially attractive. You are able to manage your library account and browse through the media in the library online from at home. Above and beyond that, you can use search functions of other national and international library networks. If a book that you need is not in the library, you can order it through the interlibrary loan system (€ 1.50 per book) from another library.

The library staff offers introductions to the use of the library at the beginning of every semester. These are conducted for groups and, if requested, for **individuals** as well. Furthermore, the library offers special help, for example in looking for literature, arranged separately according to discipline.

Detailed information on the services and instructions offered by the library can be found at: <http://www.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/library/schulung/>

4.3 Writing Your Dissertation

Writing a dissertation is a very complex process. This also means that this guide can only give a general overview.

TIP:

You can get extensive support for writing your dissertation from PunktUm. PunktUm offers useful and attractive classes in academic writing, about what requirements your dissertation has to meet, and about how to write such parts of a dissertation as the introduction in good German.

Other places to go for help are the "Writing Lab" offered by the service area SL_K5 / advice and support for studies, teaching, and career as well as the Study Guidance Center (*Zentrale Studienberatung (ZSB)*) (see also section 5.1).

Planning the Chapters of Your Dissertation

You should plan each chapter ahead just the way you planned your whole project in your proposal:

Content of the chapter:	What are the most important elements in the chapter?
Procedure in the chapter:	How can you arrange the content in such a way that you reach your goal and convince your readers?
Aim of the chapter:	What is new in this chapter?
Role of the chapter in the context of the whole dissertation:	How does the new knowledge contribute to answering your hypothesis?
Additional helpful tools:	Which materials, literature etc. do you need to write this chapter? What kind of preliminary work is necessary?

When you plan out the goal of each chapter, you may come across difficulties which you may not have thought about in the beginning. You sometimes develop new topics while you are writing and thinking. This means that when you are

planning a chapter you should try and develop your objectives as precisely as possible but still leave room for new ideas which may come up while writing. The better you plan ahead, the easier it is to formulate the content.

Formulating and First Revisions

Writing academically in another language calls for enormous cognitive skills. Not only do you have to understand complex facts and put them on paper but you also have to use the appropriate style and vocabulary in the foreign language. In order to be able to do that and not to feel overburdened it is advisable to focus only on certain points at any one time. This means that when first writing you make sure that you get the main facts right.

Once you have finished writing down a train of thought you can go back and revise it. This includes checking the content. If you are satisfied with the content you can start on a first linguistic revision. The following table lists the aspects you should revise in your first draft.

	<i>Checking the written for</i>	<i>motivating questions</i>
First Editing Step: Content	Completeness	Have you written everything that you wanted to say? Is anything substantial missing?
	Coherence	Are there gaps in your line of argumentation which may make it hard for a reader to follow your train of thought?
	Redundancy	Did you repeat arguments frequently?
	Academic soundness	Did you work in an academically appropriate way, for example, have you cited your sources correctly?
Second Edition Step: Linguistic presentation	Technical terminology	Is your use of special vocabulary correct?
	Academic language	Did you formulate everything in a scientifically appropriate way?
	Written language	Did you use appropriate written language?

Finish your revision process when you are satisfied with your text to such an extent that you find the facts presented in an academically suitable way. Then you can continue with your next train of thought. This procedure is only a suggestion to

help make the academic writing of complex facts feasible. Of course, you don't have to do it this way.

Getting Feedback

It makes sense to get feedback in order to find out whether you are able to write in an academically appropriate way. Native speakers who are writing their dissertation at the same time, possibly with the same supervisor, can give you the best feedback on your writing. They are able to judge whether your writing is appropriate for this research area and also whether the text is comprehensible.

Also it is advisable to get feedback on parts of your text from your supervisor early on. The excerpts that you hand in do not have to be a perfect final version but may still be subject to revision. Linguistically your texts should be without mistakes, i.e. give your texts to a fellow student to correct. When you discuss the texts with your supervisor s/he will tell you where you have to watch out or pay more attention in the future. This is helpful for the future because you will be able to gauge what it is that your supervisor expects of you a little better.

Further Revising

You not only revise your text after having gotten feedback but also once you have finished any given working step. This is necessary in order to prepare your text for submission. Once you have finished writing a chapter you should read it as a whole and check the content but also the readability, and the appropriateness of the academic language and formatting.

Also, before submitting your dissertation, it is recommended that you read the whole text again checking it for completeness, factual, linguistic, and formal correctness as well as coherence. This also includes, for example, checking the completeness of the bibliography and whether the introduction and conclusion fit together well. Because you are writing in a foreign language you need a proof reader. This person does not necessarily have to have studied the same subject but should be very familiar with working and writing in the target language.

Some Tips for Writing Your Dissertation

We want to finish off this section with some final advice that may help you in writing your dissertation. This list, however, does not claim to be exhaustive.

- Writing is matter of practice: Start writing from the beginning on. Do not wait too long.
- Try to set yourself small goals you can realize within a manageable period. This allows you to divide your big project into smaller more manageable steps.
- When you get new ideas, you should always write them down in the same place. Having a portfolio may make sense here. Writing a dissertation is a creative process, and it is very possible that in unexpected situations you suddenly get ideas that help you along. You should note these ideas down so you can use them later on.
- Try to develop an awareness about your phases of concentration and use them to work on your dissertation.
- Again and again there can be phases when you cannot concentrate well or working seems especially difficult. Sometimes it is helpful to talk about the problem. Tell your friends about the state of your dissertation. Some problems are get resolved by simply starting to write and letting your thoughts flow freely and develop "on their own." If your writing problem should continue or seem overwhelming you can get help at, for example, PunktUm and the "Writing Lab" offered by the service area SL_K5 / advice and support for studies, teaching, and career as well as the Study Guidance Center (*Zentrale Studienberatung (ZSB)*) (see also section 5.1).

5 Centers for People Seeking Advice and the Help Offered

During the course of a dissertation you may have the one or other crisis. In order for you to master them quickly Bielefeld University has installed several contact points where you can get help and advice. Below you will find a list with places to turn to should you need advise.

5.1 General Center for People Seeking Advice

The first place for international students and doctoral candidates to go to is the **International Office** (IO) room D0-120 – D0-142). The staff members at the International Office are there for you and all your questions concerning your studies. If you, for example, do not know where to go with a certain problem, you can get support at the International Office. The staff members support you as you enroll, apply for admission, and with questions concerning the library and scholarships. Above and beyond that, the International Office also offers an extensive program for international students and doctoral candidates outside of the university (one-day-excursions, weekend trips, several day-long trips, and gatherings in the Center for International Encounter (*Internationales Begegnungszentrum (IBZ)*) hoping to make it easier for you to get to know other people.

Information about the support as well as leisure activities offered by the International Office can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/International/Students/DE/Betreuung>

interKontakt is a mentoring program associated with the International Office. Its objectives are to support international doctoral candidates. The main objective of the program is to facilitate your start in Bielefeld and at Bielefeld University and to promote the contact between local and international doctoral candidates. International students and doctoral candidates who are interested will be assigned to a mentor who is there to assist with questions and problems. The mentor will help you manage your daily routines at Bielefeld University (e.g. finding the right people to contact), assist you when going to the local authorities, or completing forms, and can introduce you to other people.

Detailed information about *interKontakt* can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/AAA/Promovierende/>. Of course you may also get information personally from the staff members of *interKontakt* (room: D0-140, phone: 0521 – 106-2488, email: brother-sister@uni-bielefeld.de).

PunktUm is a project that is part of the German as a Foreign Language Department at Bielefeld University and offers German language courses tailored to the needs of the following groups:

a) Doctoral candidates writing their dissertation in German:

You can attend classes or workshops on topics in the area of academic German aiming at helping you organize and linguistically realize your projects. In one-on-

one meetings you will get personalized feedback about the academic writing process and some excerpts from your text.

b) Doctoral candidates not writing their dissertation in German:

In German language classes which are sorted by levels (beginning to advanced level (European frame of reference: A1-C1)) you can learn German. In these classes you acquire communicative competence in order for you to take part in university and everyday life in German with more ease

Extensive information about PunktUm can be found at : <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/punktum>. Of course, you may also get information personally from the team members of PunktUm (room C3-226, phone 0521/106-3616, office hours: Tues. and Thur. 2 – 4 p.m., email: punktum@uni-bielefeld.de).

The **Study Guidance Center** (*Zentrale Studienberatung (ZSB)*) can give you advice on questions concerning your studies. On their webpages you also find tips on "academic writing." The staff members offer help in the form of dialog for individuals, couples, or groups and also help in finding other counseling or therapeutical institutions or self-help groups. Above and beyond that, they offer confidential psychological counseling free of charge. Appointments can be made every day from 10- 12 a.m. in the secretary's office (room R5-151) of the Study Guidance Center.

The Study Guidance Center has established a **coaching group** specifically for **female doctoral candidates**. This group meets every other week and discusses and tries to solve specific problems female researchers face such as scarce resources, relationship problems, problems organizing child care, problems planning their work as well as integration in the academic setting. Above and beyond that, women have the opportunity to meet other women in a similar situation. The Study Guidance Center is also willing to establish a group for female international doctoral candidates if there is a demand.

Detailed information about the counseling offers of the Study Guidance Center can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Einrichtungen/ZSB/>

The **Counseling Center for Studies, Teaching, and Career** (*Beratung für Studium, Lehre und Karriere (SL_K5)*) teaches **key competences** to doctoral candidates and those working on their postdoctoral qualification (*Habilitation*). This includes, among other things giving academic talks, looking for information, working on projects, and moderating meetings. These skills are seldom acquired during your

university studies but are absolutely necessary for an academic career or a vocation outside the university. Doctoral candidates who are employed at a professorial chair can also take courses on the didactics of teaching seminars, conducting writing classes as well as student-oriented teaching methods. The SL_K5 consults the **Writing Lab** for questions concerning your own writing and, for example, offers workshops on writing research papers.

→ Further information can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/> Studium → Beratung für Studium, Lehre und Karriere – SL_K5 → Promovierende und Habilitierende (http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Studium/SL_K5/angebote_promovierende/index.html)

5.2 Emergency Assistance in Dire Financial Situations

For students and doctoral candidates who are in a dire financial situation through no fault of their own, there are several sources of support available. The financial aid is normally a one-time grant of no more than € 250.

You can apply for such a grant at the following institutions:

The **Protestant Student Congregation** (*Evangelische Studierendengemeinde* (ESG)) supports students from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This is either a one-time financial grant or financial aid in order to return home.

Your contact person for this emergency assistance is Reverend Corinna Hirschberg (or her spokesperson). Counseling hours are Tuesdays from 10 – 12 a.m. or Thursdays from 3 – 5 p.m. Appointments have to be made. This appointment can be made in the ESG's office.

Detailed information on the support given by the Protestant Student Community can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/> → Studium → Studentische Hochschulgruppen → ESG-Evangelische Studierendengemeinde (http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/stud/esg/ss06/esg_index.html)

The Protestant Student Congregation also grants financial aid to international students allowing them to finish their studies without having to worry about financial problems. This support can be granted for up to six months. Information can also be found at: http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/stud/esg/ss06/esg_index.html

Above and beyond foundations and scholarships, there is the **Catholic University Congregation** (*Katholische Hochschulgemeinde* (KHG)), which tries to be open to the problems of international students and tries to give financial support within the

scope of their financial resources. The financial resources for international students come from the archdiocese in Paderborn and allows quick and concrete relief in dire financial situations.

More information can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/stud/khgbi/>

The **Society for the Support of International Students in Bielefeld** (*Verein zur Förderung ausländischer Studierender in Bielefeld e.V.*) tries to give financial aid to international students at the universities in Bielefeld. The resources available come from donations and are limited. It is therefore it is not possible to give greater amounts of money or to grant scholarships. There is a one-time financial grant of € 250.

More information can be found at: <http://www.verein-ausl-stud-bielefeld.de/Page1.HTM>

The **Westphalian-Lippian University Society** (*Westfälisch-Lippische Universitätsgesellschaft*) has been supporting students financially since 1983. Financial support is granted if no financial aid can be expected to come from a scholarship or any other financial aid program.

Detailed information can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/ugb/Foerderung/index.html>

Above and beyond that, there is the possibility of applying for financial support at the end of your studies from the **Committee for Granting Scholarships and Emergency Aid for International Students** (*Kommission zur Vergabe von Stipendien und Nothilfen für ausländische Studierende*) at Bielefeld University. Students are granted up to € 585 a month and doctoral candidates up to € 700 a month for a period of no more than six months.

Detailed information on the amount of the financial support and the application procedure can be found at: [http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/\(de\)/International/Students/DE/Kosten/](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/(de)/International/Students/DE/Kosten/)

5.3 Help with Social and Legal Problems

International students can also contact the **International Office** (IO) if they have legal or social problems.

The **General Student Union** (*Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss (AStA)*) offers support and advice on the organization and financial management of studies for all students and also organizes events on these topics. One section of the AStA, the **International Student Committee** (*Internationaler Studierendenrat (ISR)*), is concerned with the interests of international students. International students are invited to turn to the ISR any time with questions about their studies or other problems such as finding living accommodations.

Detailed information can be found at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/stud/asr/index.htm>

The **Protestant Student Congregation** (*Evangelische Studierendengemeinde (ESG)*) offers financial support to all students as well as **pastoral care**. Reverend Corinna Hirschberg is available to students for personal talks outside of her fixed office hours. Just call ahead for an appointment (phone: 0521/881140).

The **Catholic University Congregation** (*Katholische Hochschulgemeinde (KHG)*) also offers counseling for any questions concerning your personal problems as well as excessive stress in your studies and weak nerves before exams. Reverend Josef Holtkotte is available as a counselor for personal talks with students. These can take place in his office hours (Wednesdays from 6 – 7:30 p.m.) in the **Catholic University Community Center** (*Katholische Hochschulgemeinde (KHG)*) (Turnerstr. 2, phone: 0521 – 65296) or by special appointment.

6 Opening the Doctoral Procedure

Once you have completed your dissertation you can talk with your supervisor about opening the doctoral procedure. This is done either with the Doctoral Admissions Committee at your faculty or with the Board of Advisors of your graduate school or graduate program. You have to attach the following papers to the application:

- three to five copies of your dissertation,
- if applicable, three to five summaries of no more than five pages (this differs from faculty to faculty),
- a résumé/curriculum vitae (giving information about your academic career as well as your publications),

- a statement that you did not submit your dissertation in this form to any other faculty and that you did it yourself using only the tools and sources allowed for a dissertation,
- if applicable, documentation of the required credit points (*Scheine*, transcripts)
- if applicable, the permission to write the dissertation in a language other than German
- suggestions for examiners for the Doctorate Examination Committee.

In order to be admitted to the doctoral procedure as a member of a graduate school or graduate program you have to document additional credit points (*Scheine*/transcripts).

Detailed information on the necessary papers for opening the doctoral procedure can be obtained at your faculty or on the webpages of your graduate school or graduate program at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de>

The Doctoral Examination Committee decides whether your dissertation will be accepted or not. Its members conduct the oral/colloquium/viva (*Disputation*) and mark your performance. The Doctoral Admissions Committee has three members: Usually they consist of your supervisor, one further professor, and one academic assistant with a doctorate. At least one of the members has to have supervised your dissertation and at least one member has to be a member of your faculty. There are exceptions which allow an academic assistant with a doctorate to supervise a dissertation. In this case a second professor has to be elected onto the committee.

Your supervisor **renders an expert opinion on your dissertation** as does a second examiner. The expert opinions have to be completed six weeks to three months after you have submitted your dissertation. This time frame varies from faculty to faculty.

The following grades can be given for a dissertation:

summa cum laude:	excellent
magna cum laude:	very good
cum laude:	good
rite:	satisfactory

Once your dissertation has been graded, the expert opinions and, if you want, your own opinion, will be made available in the dean's office for other members with a doctorate at your faculty to take a position on, if they wish. The final decision about the dissertation is made about two weeks after the end **period of public availability**.

During the semester break this final decision-making process is extended by four to six weeks. Should the dissertation not be accepted, you can submit a revised version within a specified period of time.

In the *viva* (*Disputation* or *Rigorosum*) you have to prove to the doctorate committee that you can also present your research topic and other academic topics from your area in a competent way, explain them and discuss them critically.

At Bielefeld University there is usually a "Disputation." Depending on the doctorate regulations you present and defend academic theses which you previously formulated. After your presentation you critically discuss your theses with the members of the doctoral committee. One of the theses usually refers to your dissertation and in this way serves as a defense of your dissertation. A disputation normally lasts 90 minutes and is awarded the same grades that are given to a dissertation: *summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, *cum laude*, or *rite*. More information can be found in the doctoral regulations.

For the final grade of your doctorate the grade of the dissertations usually counts doubly. Once you have your **doctoral certificate** signed by the dean, you have completed your doctorate. The certificate is issued only after you have published your dissertation. Until then you may not add the title ("Dr.") to your name. Until the publication process has been completed, you may use "*Doctor designatus*" (*Dr. des.*) as a title.

7 Publishing the Dissertation

Publishing your dissertation within one year after the oral exam is part of the doctoral procedure. The doctoral regulations varying as they do from faculty to faculty require different ways and types of publication. Some are satisfied if the dissertation is published online. But quite a number for regulations ask for at least a small number of printed copies. Ask at your faculty which procedures you have to follow.

Detailed information can be found in the regulations for doctorates at your faculty at: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de>

There are several options for publishing your dissertation in a printed form. You can either publish it with a big publishing house, publish it yourself, or print it on demand. The advantage of a publishing house is that an ISBN-number is automatically assigned to your dissertation making it easy to order the book

through a bookstore. The disadvantages are the high costs and the minimal number of at least 150 copies that frequently are required.

If you publish the dissertation independently, you take on the work that the publishing houses usually carry out. This includes, for example, editorial work, preparing the master copy, and finding a printer for the book. The advantages here are the relatively low costs. The disadvantage is the time consuming effort. Above and beyond that, many printers demand that you order at least one hundred copies.

With printing on demand, also called books on demand, the book is only printed if ordered. The file with the print-ready manuscript is deposited at the printing company. The printer makes sure that the book is assigned an ISBN-number and listed in the catalog of available books. If only one person orders the book then it is printed for this person only. The contracts and costs vary depending from printer to printer. Above and beyond that, you have to ensure that with this kind of publication you meet the criteria set by the doctoral regulations. The advantage of printing on demand is the low cost risk. The printing company, on the other hand, does not advertise your book in any way.

Another way is to publish your dissertation online. The library offers a special **server for online publications** (*Server für Online-Publikationen (BieSON)*) for this purpose. Here research work from **members of Bielefeld University** can be published for free in the internet. On this server you find dissertations, post-doc dissertations (*Habilitationen*), and articles, proceedings, research papers, and reports. The publications are usually archived permanently. With the help of the authors qualified abstracts are put in the databases where they can be accessed.

The *Bielefelder Server für Online-Publikationen (BisSON)* can be found at:
<http://bieson.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/uni/merkblatt.php>

Nowadays online publications are well-established in the natural sciences. This is still different in the humanities and social sciences, where the book remains the standard medium of publication. As a rule you have to remember that if you are planning an academic career, you should not save on publishing. There are some good publishing houses in Bielefeld which have specialized on academic or scientific contributions and are able to publish quickly and with a high level of competence.

But if you are interested in the title alone, it makes sense to publish online. It does not cost anything and can be done very quickly. This way you get your certificate

and the title speedily.

If you want to publish online initially in order to save money and only later as a book, you should look carefully at the **contract** of the publishing houses that seem relevant for your purposes. Some publishing houses want the exclusive copyright to your publication and do not tolerate a competing online publication.

Quite a few professors are the editors of scholarly publication series and may find dissertations and other academic writings stimulating for their series. Be sure to ask your supervisors about such possibilities. Perhaps your advisor is the editor of such a series or knows someone else who is the editor of a suitable series.

8 Appendix

8.1 Overview of scholarships available for international doctoral candidates

BAYHOST – Bayerisches Hochschulzentrum für Mittel-, Ost- und Südosteuropa Bavarian University Center for Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe One-Year-Scholarship Program of the Free State of Bavaria

The Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research, and the Arts grants one-year scholarships to university graduates from all areas if they come from Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Rumania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, or Hungary. The scholarships are intended to finance doctoral, graduate, or postgraduate studies at a Bavarian university. German or English language proficiency is required.

Duration of scholarship: 12 - 36 months, age limit: 30 years.

<http://www-cgi.uni-regensburg.de/Einrichtungen/Bayhost/stipendien.shtml>

Boehringer-Ingelheim-Fonds - Foundation for Basic Medical Research Doctoral-Scholarship

This is a scholarship for excellent young German and international researchers who have a challenging and clearly defined research project in the area of fundamental biomedical research and are pursuing the goal of new scientific knowledge. The foundation supports Europeans in Europe and overseas as well as doctoral candidates from overseas working in Europe. Good knowledge of English is required.

Duration of scholarship: about 2 years, age limit: 27 years.

<http://www.bifonds.de/scholar/require.htm>

Cusanuswerk – Cusanus Foundation Graduate Scholarships

The Cusanuswerk is one of eleven foundations for the gifted in Germany. It is a Catholic institution and grants federal subsidies. The Cusanuswerk supports German as well as European doctoral candidates from all areas (except medicine) who want to pursue their doctorate in Germany. International applicants have to have been admitted for a doctorate at a German university first. Germany language skills are required. Another requirement is to be a member of the Catholic church.

Duration of scholarship: about 24-36 months, age limit: 32 years.

http://www.cusanuswerk.de/html/foerd/fr_foerd.html

Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (German Federal Environmental Foundation) Doctoral Scholarships

The German Federal Environmental Foundation grants doctoral scholarships for young German and international researchers from all areas on the condition that the project continues research work in environmental protection areas (there is an emphasis on environmental protection in Germany).

Duration of scholarship: max. 3 years, age limit: 28 years.

<http://www.dbu.de/stipendien/>

International Scholarship Program

The German Federal Environmental Foundation (*Die Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt*) works together with the Baltic states, the region of Kaliningrad, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria to maintain a cooperative international scholarship program. This program is intended for young researchers from these countries who want to earn a further qualification based on a research stay in Germany.

Duration of scholarship: 6 – 12 months in Germany, age limit: 28 years.

<http://www.dbu.de/stipendien/international.php>

Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) (German Research Council)

Graduate Programs / (Research Training Group RTG)

German and international doctoral candidates in graduate programs can pursue their project in a coordinated research program supported by several university teachers. An interdisciplinary orientation of the research and study program is desirable. Each graduate program grants nine to 25 scholarships a year.

Duration of scholarship: max. 36 months, age limit: 28 years.

[http://www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/koordinierte_programme/graduierenkoll
egs/](http://www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/koordinierte_programme/graduierenkoll
egs/)

Das Deutsche Krebsforschungszentrum (DKFZ) (German Cancer Research Center, Heidelberg)

International Program for Doctoral Candidates

The German Cancer Research Center (*Das Deutsche Krebsforschungszentrum (DKFZ)*) grants scholarships to interdisciplinary researchers who want to do their doctorate in Germany in the areas of biochemistry, biology, biomedicine, biophysics, chemistry, media and information, mathematics, medicine, medical-physics, molecular biology, pharmacology, physics, and cancer research. Most of the doctoral candidates with a scholarship hold a degree in biology, physics, computer science, pharmacology, chemistry, or medicine. Many scholarship holders come from countries outside of Germany, though usually from Europe, but also from Asia, South America, and Africa. Good knowledge of English is expected.

Duration of scholarship: about 3 years, age limit: 30 years.

<http://www.dkfz.de/phd/>

Evangelische Studienwerk e.V. Villigst (Protestant Study Foundation, Villigst)

Doctoral Scholarships

The Evangelische Studienwerk supports especially gifted and socially interested doctoral candidates from all areas working on a doctorate at a German University. International students can apply for a scholarship if they have been admitted to doctoral studies at a German university. Aside from the scholarship there is an extensive offer of training and educational opportunities for doctoral candidates. Emphasis on special topics (currently: globalization and employment, nanophysics, power-morality-religion) allows for a close cooperation with selected university teachers.

Duration of scholarship: 1- 3 years, age limit: no age limit..

<http://www.evstudienwerk.de/index.php?action=stipendien&sub=promotionsfoerderung>

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Friedrich-Ebert Foundation)

Graduate Scholarships

This foundation, closely affiliated with the SPD party, supports especially gifted and socio-politically engaged German and international students and doctoral candidates from all areas but medicine. Main focus: developing and transforming countries. The researchers should be in Germany already and know German.

Duration of scholarship: 24 – 36 months, age limit: no age limit.

http://www.fes.de/fes_stuf/inhalt/in_mat.htm

Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung (Friedrich-Naumann Foundation)

Graduate Scholarships

This foundation, closely affiliated with the FDP party, is intended for German and international students and graduate students at German universities. The topic of the dissertation has to be academically and socio-politically relevant. The foundation neither supports doctorates in the medical and dental field nor postdoctoral programs, postgraduate studies, doctorates in their final phases, or international graduates outside of Germany. A very good knowledge of German is a prerequisite.

Duration of scholarship: 1 - 3 years, age limit: no age limit.

http://www.fnst.org/webcom/show_article.php/_c-884/_nr-1/i.html

Gerda-Henkel-Stiftung (Gerda-Henkel Foundation)

Doctoral Scholarships

The goal of the scholarship program for German and international historians and archeologists is to support highly qualified young researchers. Applicants will only then be considered if their work during their studies and their university degree show that they are especially gifted and if their dissertation can be expected to show results considerably higher than average. Important selection criteria are the length and result of the course of studies, the final grade, age, and special qualifications. Good German and English is a prerequisite.

Duration of scholarship: max. 24 months, age limit: 28 years.

http://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/content.php?nav_id=180&language=de

Special Program for Central Asia

The special program for Central Asia is intended for excellent young researchers who have the focus of their project on Central Asia, i.e. the countries Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Northern Afghanistan, Southern Siberia, Tadjikistan, Tibet, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Xinjiang. This program encourages research projects in the area of archeology and the history of art.

Research from the areas of history, historical Islam studies, architecture, and art studies are also considered. English and German language knowledge is required.

Duration of scholarship: max. 24 months, age limit: no age limit.

http://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/content.php?nav_id=182&language=de

Gottlieb-Daimler- and Karl-Benz-Stiftung (Gottlieb-Daimler and Karl-Benz Foundation)

Scholarship Program "Research Work Outside of Germany"

German doctoral candidates as well as international doctoral candidates pursuing their doctorate at a German research institute can apply for scholarships for a research stay outside of Germany during their doctorate. This program is open to candidates from all disciplines working on any topic concentrating on a country of their choice. Prerequisite is your own project and an academic embedding in the host country.

Duration of scholarship: 24 months, age limit: 30 years.

<http://www.daimler-benz-stiftung.de/home/fellowship/de/start.html>

Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung (Hanns-Seidel Foundation)

Scholarships for Abroad

This foundation, closely affiliated with the CSU party, supports highly qualified international postgraduates from all areas who have a good knowledge of German and are themselves socio-politically engaged.

Duration of scholarship: 3-12 months, age limit: 32 years.

<http://www.hss.de/573.shtml>

Hans-Böckler-Stiftung (Hans-Böckler Foundation)

Doctoral Scholarships

The Hans-Böckler-Foundation, which is closely affiliated with the Federation of German Trade Unions (*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*) (*DGB*), promotes doctoral candidates from all areas who are academically or in some other special way competent and engaged socio-politically or in a union. International doctoral candidates can be supported only if they have already been admitted to doctoral studies at a Germany university. Doctorates pursued exclusively outside of Germany are usually not funded. The research project should be socio-politically relevant, and an important contribution to the research area has to be expected.

Duration of scholarship: 24 months, age limit: 40 years.

<http://www.boeckler.de/rde/xchg/SID-3D0AB75F-1BD90787/hbs/hs.xsl/459.html>

Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (Heinrich-Böll Foundation)

Doctoral Scholarships

This foundation, closely affiliated with the Green party, grants scholarships to German and international students and doctoral candidates from all areas according to the guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Foreign Office. German knowledge is expected.

Duration of scholarship: 24 – 36 months, age limit: no age limit.

http://www.boell.de/de/12_studien/2294.html

Herder-Institut (Herder Institute)

Scholarship Program for Eastern-Central-Europe

The Herder-Institute employs its collections for the support of and functions as a forum for academic discussion of the research on the countries and peoples in eastern Central Europe (chiefly Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and the Baltic states). The main focus lies on the history of historically German territories in the East and German settlements in eastern Central Europe. Scholarships are granted to German and international graduates, doctoral candidates from history and historical cultural studies as well as to those who already have their doctorate. Sufficient knowledge of German has to be documented in writing.

Duration of scholarship: max. 3 months, age limit: no age limit.

<http://www.herder-institut.de/index.php?lang=de&id=2195>

Katholischer Akademischer Ausländer-Dienst (KAAD) (Catholic Academic Exchange Service)

Program for Eastern Europe

The program for Eastern Europe offers young Catholic researchers from all areas connected to eastern and southeastern European countries scholarships for research

stays. The scholarships can only be granted to those who have a concrete study or research project and can justify the necessity for a stay in Germany. These are especially, for example, projects that serve as multipliers for transitional and developmental processes as well as democratization in Europe. Applications should generally be made from the home country within the appropriate partner program. German language knowledge is essential.

Duration of scholarship: max. 3 – 36 months, age limit: no age limit.

http://www.kaad.de/deutsch/prog_oe.htm

Scholarship Program 1

The KAAD supports international researchers from all areas invited to Germany within participating country programs for additional and more extensive studies. The selection of the countries sending the researchers is made in cooperation with clerical relief organizations and the German Conference of Bishops. Interested researchers from Africa, eastern Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East can apply as long as they meet the selection criteria. The academic committee of the KAAD makes the final decision. German language knowledge is necessary.

Duration of scholarship: 3 – 36 months, age limit: no age limit.

<http://www.kaad.de/deutsch/Programme.htm>

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Konrad-Adenauer Foundation)

Graduate Scholarships

This foundation, closely affiliated with the CDU party, grants scholarships within the framework of graduate programs for German and international graduates coming from all areas but medicine and dentistry subjects. International applicants interested in applying have to be so-called "*Bildungsinländer*" (specified in § 8 of the BAföG) meaning that they got their school leaving certificate (*Abitur*) in Germany. These graduate programs were installed to ensure the integration of highly qualified doctoral candidates in the academic environment and to guarantee extensive and efficient support of them. These programs promote interdisciplinary dialog as well as constructive competition and contribute to the extension of academic networks.

Duration of scholarship: 12 – 24 months, age limit: 32 years.

http://www.kas.de/begabtenfoerderung/688_webseite.html

Max-Planck-Gesellschaft und Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (Max Planck Society and the German Conference of University Presidents)

International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS)

The Research Schools offer German and young international researchers interested in interdisciplinary and innovative basic research the opportunity to pursue their

doctorate in a well-structured trainee program with excellent research conditions. English language knowledge is mandatory.

Duration of scholarship: 36 months, age limit: no age limit.

<http://www.mpg.de/instituteProjekteEinrichtungen/schoolauswahl/index.html>

Minerva-Stiftung (Minerva Foundation)

Minerva-Scholarship

This scholarship program allows German and Israeli researchers from all areas to spend a longer period of time at a research institute in the respective host country. The length of stay varies from six to 36 months for graduate students and from six to 24 months for post doctorates. Young researchers are given priority in the selection process. Applicants holding a job may not apply. Good English is required. Duration of scholarship: 36 months, age limit: no age limit.

<http://www.minerva.mpg.de/>

Nationale Kontaktstellen (NKS) für Humanressourcen und Mobilität (National Clearinghouse for Human Resources and Mobility)

Marie Curie host-driven actions

The Marie Curie host-driven actions are primarily for young researchers who can be supported through, for example, the introduction of extensive and structured programs for transnational training and mobility. Above and beyond that, this program intends to animate the development and transfer of research competences. Duration of scholarship: 3 months to max. 3 years, age limit: no age limit.

<http://www.humboldt-foundation.de/de/programme/mariecurie/institut/index.htm>

Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung (Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation)

Doctoral Scholarships

This foundation, is closely affiliated with the Linke party (Party of the Left). German and international applicants for a scholarship from the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation may come from all areas but medicine. They have to be highly qualified and show a pronounced social commitment in accordance with the values of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. Prerequisites for an application are the prior admission to doctoral studies at a German university and a very good knowledge of German or English.

Duration of scholarship: 24 months, age limit: 30 years.

http://www.rosalux.de/engl/student_services/scholarships_content.htm

Schering-Stiftung (Schering Foundation)

Short Term Scholarships

The Schering Foundation wants to support young and talented researchers from Poland and Eastern Europe doing basic research in biology, medicine, or chemistry. Duration of scholarship: up to 3 months, age limit: 33 years.

<http://www.scheringstiftung.de/html/kurzstip.html>

Doctoral Scholarships

These are scholarships for German or international students of biology, medicine, and chemistry or an equivalent interdisciplinary course of studies (e.g. bioinformatics, biochemistry). The age limit for applicants is 28 years and the work on the dissertation project may not have been started yet. The prerequisite is a completed course of studies which may not date back any further than two years. Duration of scholarship: 2 years, age limit: 28 years.

<http://www.scheringstiftung.de/html/stipendien.html>

Stiftung der Deutschen Wirtschaft (German Economic Foundation)

Doctoral Scholarships

The German Economic Foundation and its "Klaus Murman" scholarships financially support German and international doctoral candidates whose future careers in key economic and social positions are promising. Foreign applicants have to be in Germany when applying. The financial support is for applications coming from all areas. However, applications coming from the natural sciences and engineering are especially desirable. Good command of German is required.

Duration of scholarship: 24 months, age limit: 30 years.

<http://www.sdw.org/studienfoerderwerk/>

Stiftung des deutschen Volkes (Foundation of the German People)

Doctoral Scholarships

The Foundation of the German people supports especially gifted German and international doctoral candidates from all areas who are working on a challenging dissertation project expected to make an important contribution to their research area. In order to apply you have to be proposed to the foundation by your supervisor in Germany. Aside from the scholarship the foundation also offers summer schools and forums to their scholarship holders as a means of academic exchange.

Duration of scholarship: 24 - 36 month, age limit: no age limit.

<http://www.studienstiftung.de/foerder/promo.html>

ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius (ZEIT Foundation Ebelin and Gerd Bucerius)

Doctoral Scholarships

The doctorate scholarships from the ZEIT Foundation support the research on historical relations between Germany and Central and Eastern Europe. Since 2001

young German and international researchers have been given the opportunity to write their dissertation on the history of Central Europe. These dissertations are supposed to show the many historical relations between eastern Central Europe and German and European history. The doctoral program is supposed to strengthen the relations, the international cooperation of young researchers as well as knowledge transfer to and from Central and Eastern Europe. Above and beyond that, the historical relations between Germany and its eastern neighbors as part of a mutual European history are supposed to be strengthened. German language knowledge and, if applicable, knowledge of an eastern European language is required.

Duration of scholarship: max. 30 months, age limit: 30 years.

<http://www.zeit-stiftung.de/home/start.php>

Detailed information about these and other scholarships can be found on the webpages of the Researcher's Mobility Portal Germany at: http://www.eracareers-germany.de/portal/stipendiensuche_in.html

8.2 Recommended Reading on Writing a Dissertation

Haas, Erika and Randi Gunzenhäuser, (2006): *Promovieren mit Plan. Ihr individueller Weg: von der Themensuche zum Dokortitel*, Munich: UTB, price: € 12.90.

This is guide for people who want to work on their doctorate or those already working on it. This book is written for those who are thinking about or planning a dissertation or have already started. Its aim is to avoid painstaking experiences while pursuing a doctorate. Aside from all the different motivations and starting positions there are for doctoral candidates there are many hurdles everyone has to take when preparing and writing a dissertation. The book offers tips about what has to be considered and how hurdles can be taken.

Knigge-Illner, Helga (2002): *Der Weg zum Dokortitel. Strategien für die erfolgreiche Promotion*, Frankfurt: Campus, price: € 15.90.

Each year there are countless doctoral candidates who have to master the organization of their dissertation. Comparably few reach their goal. Writing a dissertation is hard work which includes dealing with and overcoming problems and frustrations. If you want to pursue a doctorate you are often left to yourself. This guide presents the strategies necessary in order to master the challenges. This book is helpful in that it assists you in building a goal oriented motivation and illustrates how to overcome problems using examples, concrete tools, and exercises. From the

content: writing a dissertation as a working and life situation; recognizing problems and narrowing them down; managing the dissertation – project management and planning; the first phases of the project; narrowing down the topic; academic writing as a process; overcoming writer's block; defending your own position; presenting the dissertation to others.

Messing, Barbara and Klaus Peter Huber (2004): *Die Doktorarbeit - Vom Start zum Ziel. Leit(d)faden für Promotionswillige*, Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer, price: € 16.95.

Getting a doctorate – is it worth the trouble? How can I finance a dissertation? Who supervises it and how do I start an academic project in the first place? Anyone interested in getting a doctorate will find this guide to be an ideal companion on this difficult path. Topics that are dealt with are, for example, the academic research environment, time management, techniques of creativity, academic writing and publishing, dealing with feelings of low self-confidence. The third revised edition has been supplemented with information on the new bachelor and master programs, the new university law, pursuing a doctorate outside of the university, and preparing for the viva. Above and beyond that, this guide has an annotated bibliography, an extensive and descriptive index of relevant internet addresses and exercises following each of the chapters.

Stock, Steffen, Schneider, Patricia, Peper, Elisabeth, and Molitor, Eva (eds.) (2006): *Erfolgreich promovieren. Ein Ratgeber von Promovierten für Promovierende*, Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer, price: € 22.95.

This is a guide for doctoral candidates from all areas. It helps readers work more efficiently on their dissertation by accompanying the reader through all the stages of the dissertation starting with the decision to pursue a doctorate, the conditions under which this is done, the writing and finishing of the dissertation up to the oral/colloquium/viva and publication. At the same time this guide deals with and tries to prevent problems such as feeling lost and alone while writing, writer's block, time problems, and stress. Above and beyond that, this guide contains many reports from doctoral candidates from various subject areas. From the content: writing a dissertation – yes or no?; working conditions; planning and organizing; the process of writing; overcoming crises; finishing the dissertation; special situations; field reports from different subject areas.